



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Public Library

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CITY LIBRARIES CELEBRATE FREEDOM TO READ DURING “BANNED BOOK WEEK,” SEPTEMBER 24 THROUGH OCTOBER 2

SAN DIEGO – To help raise awareness regarding the censorship of books, the City of San Diego Public Library will present exhibits and activities during national Banned Book Week, Saturday, September 24th through Saturday, October 2nd. The theme of this year’s Banned Book Week is “Free Your Mind.”

“It’s important to realize that not every book will be right for every reader,” says San Diego Public Library Director Deborah Barrow. “However, the freedom to choose for ourselves is a hard-won right that we must not take for granted. Reading, speaking, thinking and expressing ourselves freely are core American values.”

Members of the public will be invited to read aloud excerpts from banned or challenged books at a special event and reading marathon, with readings beginning on the half hour, from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 28, at the Central Library, located at 820 E St. in downtown San Diego. The evening will be capped by the 6:30 p.m. screening of *The Chocolate War*, based on the frequently challenged young adult book of the same name about a Catholic prep school secret society that uses intimidation to enforce the cultural norms of the school.

In addition, three Banned Books Week exhibits will be on display at the Central Library: a window display outside, one in the Literature Section of challenged novels from the top 100 challenged classic books in the U.S., and a third outside the Children’s Room.

Other Banned Book Week events include:

- Wall Display at the Point Loma Branch Library
- Banned Book Read-Out at the La Jolla/Riford Library on Friday, September 30, 1:00-5:30 p.m.
- Screening of the film *Fahrenheit 451*, based on the perennially banned book of the same name by Ray Bradbury at the Central Library on Sunday, October 2 at 2:00 p.m.

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Observed since 1982, the Banned Book Week campaign is sponsored by the American Booksellers Association, American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, American Library Association, American Society of Journalists and Authors, Association of American Publishers and National Association of College Stores. The campaign is endorsed by the Center for the Book of the Library of Congress.

Between 400 and 500 book challenges are recorded each year by the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. However, it is estimated that less than one-quarter of all challenges are reported and recorded by public and school libraries. A "challenge" is defined as a formal, written complaint filed with a library or school about a book's content or appropriateness. The majority of challenges (roughly 60 percent) are brought by parents, followed by library patrons and administrators. Each challenge represents an effort to remove books from school curricula or library shelves.

The American Library Association, along with its fellow Banned Book Week co-sponsors, hosts an annual *Virtual Read-Out* where readers from around the world are able to participate. For more information on Banned Book Week, please visit the ALA at <http://www.ala.org>.

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library's Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library's catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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